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THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ITS RELATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution (43/182), calling upon the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the regional commissions and other organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to include in their agenda during their 1989 meeting items regarding their contributions to the preparation of the International Development Strategy for the fourth United Nations Development Decade (IDS), the ECA prepared the African region's contribution as part of the process for the preparation of the Decade of the International Development Strategy. That contribution, as adopted by the ECA Conference of Ministers in its fifteenth meeting in Addis-Ababa, April 1989, reflected the development concerns of the region. The ECA contribution particularly pointed out that, since the period of the Fourth United Nations Development Decade coincides with the last decade of the Lagos Plan of Action, the successful implementation of such an international development strategy in Africa must necessarily take full cognizance of the issues, goals and objectives of the LPA and other similar African regional programmes.

2. Even if the General Assembly did not make the call, the experience of the Third United Nations Development Decade would have made imperative the search for a new approach to development. There is little evidence of any real economic development in the developing countries in general particularly in Africa, in the 1980's, despite the fact that the rapid economic growth of these countries was the objective of the IDS for the Third United Nations Development Decade, a goal to which the developed countries had committed themselves. What indeed happened was that while the developed and technologically advanced countries were enjoying their longest period of recovery on record during most of the decade, Africa registered the lowest growth rates and worst economic crisis decades.

3. In many respects, the 1980s was a difficult period for Africa. The average rate of growth of total regional output decelerated considerably from its 1970s level of 5.2 per cent to only 1.8 per cent in the 1980s, far below the target of the 7 per cent postulated in the IDS. A large number of individual countries in fact recorded only negative average rates of growth during the decade. As a result, per capita income fell sharply during the 1980's, declining to 80 per cent of what it was at the end of the previous decade. Overall, mass poverty spread further in the region, with about 85 per cent of the African population estimated to be living below the poverty line as many countries in the region were not able to improve the quality of life of the people in terms of the provision of social services and the generation of employment opportunities. This was exacerbated by Africa's proneness to natural calamities in terms of drought and desertification which devastated the region in the middle of the 1980's, with frequent recurrences thereafter.

4. While developed countries made massive additions to their capital formation, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the process of capital decumulation did in fact intensify in a number of African countries. This has particularly been a result of the rapid advancements in scientific and

technological development which have not been transmitted to the developing countries and in particular to Africa, at the required scale, due to inherent institutional factors governing international division of labour, market specialization, patent and technology diffusion, etc.

5. The economic external environment of the 1980s did not also favour the flow of external resources to developing countries. Falling commodity prices and protectionist trends weakened the export earnings. Bilateralism intensified at the expense of multilateralism. The flow of development finance ebbed due to budgetary constraints of donor countries; and, consequently the net transfer of resources to developing countries on the aggregate turned negative as a result of the burden of debt-service payments.

6. In the circumstances, it could hardly have been expected that the African region would attain the objectives and targets setforth in the Third United Nations Development Decade. By the end of 1980's, it had become clear that the Strategy had not yielded the expected "trickle-down" effects on Africa's economic development. The rate of growth had remained low both in real terms and relative to those of other developing regions. Thus, at the end of the Third Development Decade, Africa was yet to set in motion the required process of self-sustaining development and structural transformation.

7. The Fourth United Nations Development Decade of the IDS emanates, therefore, partly from a determination to reverse the current adverse trends in world development. Although it emphasizes the fact that the ultimate responsibility for development rests primarily with the developing countries themselves, it also underscores the fact that commitment was required on the part of the developed countries to support these countries' endeavours through policies aimed at improving the international economic and political environment, and through international cooperation. The strategy is thus conceived largely in the context of the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

8. As part of the process of the operationalization of the IDS for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade in the African region, this paper attempts to give a general view of the International development Strategy as adopted by the UN General Assembly and to bring to the attention of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers the salient features of the Strategy and its relation to Africa's development objectives and regionally-agreed development strategies. The aim is to assist African countries in planning the management of their economies within the global context, guidelines and principles of the Strategy.

THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF IDS

9. The General Assembly proclaimed the Fourth UN Development Decade, starting 1st January 1992 to 31st December 2000, and adopted the IDS for the Fourth Decade in its resolution (45/199) at its 71st Plenary Session of 21 December 1990. The Declaration on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution S-18/3, provides the basis for this Strategy.

10. The principal aims of the IDS are accelerated development in the developing countries, and strengthened international co-operation, leading to significant improvements in the human condition and a reduction in the gap between rich and poor countries. In addition, the Strategy has important social and political objectives: that development over the decade should enhance the participation of all men and women in economic and political life, protect cultural identities and assure to all the necessary means of survival.

11. The strategy also aims at helping to provide an environment that supports the evolution of political systems, based on consent and respect for human rights, as well as social and economic rights, and systems of justice that protect all citizens. To achieve these fundamental aims, six interrelated goals must be met. They are:

(a) a surge in the pace of economic growth in the developing countries;
(b) a development process that is responsive to social needs, seeks a significant reduction in extreme poverty, promotes the development and utilization of human resources and skills and is environmentally sound and sustainable;
(c) an improvement of the international systems of money, finance and trade so as to support the development process;
(d) a setting of strength and stability in the world economy and sound macro-economic management, nationally and internationally;
(e) a decisive strengthening of international development co-operation;
(f) a special effort to deal with the problems of the least developed countries, the weakest among the developing countries.

12. It would be recalled that most of these goals correspond to those found in such African regional development programmes as the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic and Social Development of Africa 1980-2000 (LPA), Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 (APPER), the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD) and the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme for socio-economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) which were adopted at the highest level by the African Heads of State and Government of the OAU. It is also noteworthy that the LPA has set the same growth objectives of 7 per cent of GDP as the IDS.

PRIORITY ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

13. The Strategy has identified a number of priority areas for re-establishing the basis for sustainable growth in the long-run. These priority aspects of development constitute the principal themes of the Strategy that have to be promoted by both national governments and the international community at large. They are:

A. Eradication of Poverty and Hunger

14. The IDS accorded the objective of eradicating poverty the highest priority. It calls for even development and distributive equity, such that economic progress will be distributed as widely as possible and not concentrated in a few localities and sectors or among limited groups of the population. It also requires, to the extent that the poor and vulnerable sections of the population are not reached by this process, special and supplementary programmes and actions be directly targeted to bring benefits to these groups.

15. The Strategy recognizes that continued erosion of living standards and social services has resulted in mounting political unrest. It, therefore, calls for full support of the international community in the eradication of poverty, as well as broad humanitarian and social goals, such as advancement in the quality of development, broad participation, and better opportunities for all peoples. All parties concerned are to strive to give effect to agreements already reached to make all efforts to meet three goals during the decade:

(a) elimination of starvation and death caused by famine;
(b) substantial reduction in malnutrition and mortality among children;
(c) elimination of major nutritional diseases;

16. To achieve these goals, the Strategy advocates the adoption and implementation of special programmes for the poorest and most vulnerable sections of the population. Such programmes should include measures aimed at increasing real income; provision of cheap and subsidized food and other essentials, including income support for the destitute; provision of training and mobilization of labour for local self-help and community development schemes; provision of facilities at low cost in such areas as health, education and transport; provision of low-cost housing; and, the improvement of human settlements as agreed in the Global Strategy for Shelter to the year 2000.

17. Similarly, eradication of poverty features as the highest priority area in Africa's development strategies. It would be recalled that one of the basic concepts of the LPA is the eradication of poverty and improvement of the welfare. Indeed the LPA and the subsequent strategies founded on it have emphatically underscored the importance and urgency of overcoming hunger and malnutrition as a fundamental premise for establishing a human-centered development through raising income levels, better income distribution, and access to basic social services of health, sanitation, nutrition, water, education and housing; and, expansion of employment opportunities.

B. Human Resources and Institutional Development

18. The strategy recognizes that education is a basic human need and a prerequisite for the achievement of the other objectives of development. Educational skills determine to a large extent a country's competitive strength and its capacity to adjust to new technologies and opportunities. A target of

reducing adult illiteracy by at least one half during the decade has already been set by the international community. The Strategy also calls for policies and measures in the area of primary and secondary education that must be provided to meet the relatively rapid increase in the school-age population of most developing countries. In fact, the goals for the decade of providing universal access to basic education and the completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of the school-age population group have been internationally accepted. The Strategy states that the content of education at the primary and secondary level must also be relevant to a country's need for economic, social and political progress. In the framework of action to meet basic learning needs, it calls for speedy implementation of the World Declaration on Education for All, adopted by the World Conference on Education for All.

19. In addition to primary and secondary schooling, the Strategy also called for policies and measures to increase higher education and enhance the development of the institutional base for the training of skilled cadre as well as for vocational training in the aquisition of scientific, technological, entrepreneurial and managerial capabilities needed for sustainable development. Alongside education, policies and measures in the field of health are to be given special attention, particularly with regards to women and children, so as to reduce malnutrition and the mortality rate. Special attention needs also to be given to primary health care and the prevention of chronic diseases, as well to sanitation, safe drinking water and nutrition. Several targets for the decade have already been agreed upon by the international community. Notable among them is the reduction of under-five mortality rates by one third or 70 per 1000 live births, the reduction of malnutrition among children under five by one half; and, the halving of maternal mortality rates. Additional steps will need to be taken for the control and prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and other epidemic diseases through training of skilled health personnel at all levels and through institutional building.

20. It has to be noted that the African development strategies and programmes, in particular AAF-SAP, the Khartoum Declaration on Human Dimension etc, have also highlighted the importance of the human dimension in overall Africa's economic recovery and transformation. In these strategies, the human-focused development centers as the prime goal of socio-economic development in the region. The basic aim of the human resources strategy is not only to close the human resource gap in terms of availability and effective rates of utilization, but most importantly, in terms of upgrading the quality of human resources for development.

C. Population

21. In the area of population, the Strategy calls for efforts to reduce social tensions by aligning the rate of population growth with the provision of basic needs such as health, education and nutrition, such that the rate of population increase does not exceed that of economic growth. The need is also stressed to increase the education of women, improved maternity and child-care and family planning services and to adapt these to the socio-cultural environment of individual countries so as to lower the rate of population growth. Particular efforts will have to be made not only to align population growth with economic

growth, but also to ensure an equitable distribution of income. This is a pre-condition without which no development can succeed.

22. It is worth mentioning that most of the policies predicated on the Strategy have been endorsed by the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action on Population. That Programme itself emphasizes the role of population in socio-economic development and attaches great importance to continued creation of awareness of population issues in development, particularly, the implications of population trends for health, education, housing, employment and nutrition, and the strategies and poicies for dealing with them.

D. Environment

23. Since the current threat to environment is the common concern of all, the Strategy calls on all countries to take effective action for the protection and enhancement of the environment in accordance with their respective capacities and responsibilities, taking into account the specific needs of developing countries. New and additional financial resources are to be channelled to developing countries to address problems of the degradation and for protection of the environment. Effective modalities for favourable access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies, particularly to developing countries, and on concessional and preferential terms, are to be given serious cosideration. The Strategy underscores the need for the realization of the goals set in the General Assembly resolution 44/228 of December 1989 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

24. One of the major development concerns in Africa is environmental degradation in terms of drought, desertification, soil erosion and deforestration, all of which threaten to cause permanent damage to the eco-system. This concern led to the adoption of policies to implement a comprehensive programme for combating drought and desertification and to stem and control the effects of drought and desertification. However, with the implementation of the integrated regional approach to halting such degradation along the lines of the proposals of the Cairo Programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the guidelines of the global environment protection of the IDS, considerable progress could be achieved during the decade.

25. Countries need to re-formulate their environmental policies on the use of appropriate energy sources, reduction of the social and economic costs arising from the problems of pollution, soil degradation, resource depletion, desertification, water-borne diseases, climatic changes and others. This points to the need to encourage and assist educational and scientific research on the combating of desertification and deforestation, and the use of renewable sources of energy. Efforts need to be intensified in the integration of the cultural use of bio-degradable materials into modern production techniques to achieve waste reduction.

E. Least Developed Countries

26. The IDS has underscored the measures adopted in favour of the LDCs by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Paris

in 1990. These measures include, inter alia, the effective implementation of the present official development assistance targets, increased access of LDCs exports to major markets, enhanced compensatory financing for shortfalls in export earnings, bilateral concessional debt forgiveness, alleviation of the debt burden, the implementation of Trade and Development Board Resolution 165(s-1X) of 11th March 1978,etc.

27. The Strategy calls on the donor countries to implement such undertakings as adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the least developed countries. It acknowledged the fact that reactivation and acceleration of growth and improvement in the global economic environment will help restore confidence in the credit-worthiness of LDCs. Innovative changes, nonetheless, will be needed to evolve instruments of lending that will help cushion least developed countries against recurrence of debt-service problems for reactivated economic growth.

OVERALL ECONOMIC POLICIES AND MEASURES

28. The Strategy asserts that the reactivation and acceleration of development require both a dynamic and supportive international economic environment and determined policies at the national level. It calls for co-ordination of macro-economic policies that should take full account of the interests and concerns of all countries. Efforts are also to be made to enhance the effectiveness of multilateral surveillance aimed at correcting existing external and fiscal imbalances, promoting non-inflationary sustainable growth, lowering real rates of interest and making exchange rates more stable and markets more accessible.

A. Macro-Economic Framework

29. The Strategy points out that accelerated development can only take place during the 1990s within supportive frameworks of economic policy, national and international. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the African region has already come out with a macroeconomic framework imbedded in the regional development strategies within which the national environment for development is to be shaped, taking account of the objectives, priorities and peculiar circumstances of the individual countries of the region. In the international front, the African Ministers of Planning have adopted a New International Agenda for the development of Africa in the 1990s, in which it urged the international community and the African countries to renew their commitment to an agenda of cooperation for sustainable social and economic development in the 1990s. The Agenda reiterates specific and clearly focused goals and objectives; namely, the accelerated transformation, integration, diversification and growth of the African economies, aimed at reducing their vulnerability to external shocks and increasing their dynamism, and the internalization of the development process.

B. External Debt

30. On the issue of debt overhang, the Strategy states clearly that finding a solution to this problem is a joint responsibility of debtor and creditor countries, financial and multilateral institutions. It advocates that recent initiatives and measures to reduce the stock and service of debt and provide relief for developing countries should be effectively implemented. The Paris Club is invited to consider increasing the flexibility of its negotiating mechanisms and to re-examine the current criteria of eligibility for debt relief, as well as the scope of the initiative taken at the Toronto Economic Summit, in June 1988, for dealing with the debt problem, and the Economic Declaration adopted at the Houston Economic Summit, in July 1990. Since external indebtedness has emerged as a main factor in the economic stalemate in the developing countries, the prolonged failure to resolve this problem is seen as hampering development during the decade of the 1990s. Creditor countries are invited, therefore, to support growth-oriented policies of debtor countries in order to facilitate the resumption of growth and development, and the restoration of credit worthiness of debtor countries.

31. The African countries have adopted in 1987 the "African Common Position on Africa's External Debt Crisis" which was updated in 1989 and discussed at the forty fourth session of the UN General Assembly. The common position spelled out a common set of guidelines for agreed debt and debt service reduction. In 1991, the Group of Seven agreed on the need for additional debt-relief measures that went well beyond the relief already granted under the Toronto Terms. The Trinidad Terms, as well as other proposals for debt reduction, are presently under consideration in the Paris Club. More recently, bolder initiatives, such as the recent debt reduction agreements, have aroused high expectations among debt-distressed African countries. And the Personal Representatives of the United Nations Secretary General on Debt proposed the cancellation of 90 per cent of the bilateral debt service of poor countries and the conversion of the remainder to highly concessional long-term loans. It was also proposed that the Toronto-type debt relief should be extended to African middle income countries, as well as more concessional development financing.

C. Development Finance, Trade and Co-operation

32. The Strategy asserts that the reactivation of development requires the mobilization of adequate external resources and that, given the limited scope for increasing savings in most developing countries, there is need to supplement savings efforts by external resources so as to raise investment to the required levels for economic growth. Donor countries should, therefore, in the 1990s, reach or surpass the 0.7 per cent target of their GNP for official development assistance (ODA). In addition, new possibilities for increasing the flow Of development finance in the 1990s will have to be explored. These include proposals for devoting part of the resources that may be released by the disarmament process and from reduced military spending - the so-called peace dividence- to development, and for recycling to the developing countries, through suitable mechanisms and modalities, part of the payments surpluses of major

developed countries. Since lending by commercial banks, in the aftermath of the debt crisis, has ceased to be a major source of development finance, it recognizes that its resumption is relevant in the context of solutions aimed both at the debt problem and at the development finance needs of the developing countries. Foreign direct investment is also expected to play an increasingly significant role as a source of development finance.

33. The goal of reactivating development in the 1990's also requires a strongly supportive environment for international trade in general, and for the external trade of the developing countries, in particular. According to the Strategy, the international trading system is the pillar of an interdependent world economy and conditions for openness and fairness should, therefore, be established in the interest of all countries. Growth and development are dependent on an open and credible multilateral trading system based on the principles of non-discrimination and transparency. Outward-looking development policies and export-based industrialization will not succeed if export markets are limited by restrictive barriers.

34. The fact that developing regions, in particular the African region, do not have a strong bargaining position in world economic relations is not new, but the deteriorating share of its trade is of great concern that needs to be redressed in order to reactivate and accelerate development in these regions. The Strategy, therefore, recommends strict adherence to the rules and principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade by all contracting parties. It also recommends trade liberalization and a sustained improvement in the access of developing country exports to the markets of both developing and developed countries through the reduction and removal of barriers. Finally, it supports full implementation of the commitment to halt and reverse protectionism undertaken in the Minister's Declaration on the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiation.

35. The 1990s are believed to hold great potential for economic integration among developing countries, and new efforts are to be made to establish effective subregional and regional market arrangements among them during the period. To improve the trade performance between subregional groupings and promote economic independence of African countries, there is need for increased attention and support from the international community in the pursuit of the objectives of regional economic cooperation and integration for genuine economic transformation. This calls for dialogue and for negotiations concerning improvements in the international trading system to be continued and expanded in the 1990s. The dialogue should focus, inter alia, on the equitable balance of interests between developed and developing countries, the adaptation and reform of the system to ensure its relevance to the changing patterns of international trade, and the need for greater co-ordination between international trade and financial policies.

D. Commodity Issues

36. Over half of African countries still depend on just one or two primary commodities for 70% or more of their export earnings. Diversification is,

therefore, needed in order to steer the economies away from such chronic dependence on primary commodities. Hence both donors and the African countries will need to adapt their lending and expenditure policies, respectively, to support diversifications programmes. To this end, the Strategy calls for better functioning of commodity markets with greater transparency. This can be done through commodity agreements between producers and consumers, with support from the second window of the Common Fund for Commodities and through the diversification of the economies of developing countries and their increased participation in the processing, marketing and distribution of their commodities, as well as through compensatory financing of commodity-related shortfalls in export earnings, particularly for the LDCs.

SECTORAL POLICIES AND MEASURES

37. While the Strategy identified certain areas as prerequisites for the reactivation of development in the 1990s - i.e. a durable solution to the debt problem, adequate financial flows, and a supportive external environment, it underscores the importance of policies that will have to be undertaken by the developing countries themselves, in particular, the need for modernizing and diversifying their economies by taking full cognizance of advances in the areas of science and technology, and mass mobilizing for development and enterprise. There are equally important policies and measures that have also to pursued by the developed countries in support of the objectives of the Strategy.

A. Science and Technology

38. The Strategy advocates that the developing countries, in their development programmes and plans, should emphasize policies and measures that will enhance their scientific and technological capability, and that they should devote adequate resources to that end. In this connection, it is worth noting that Africa has been overdependent on the outside world for machinery, spare-parts, technical and technological expertise, and that this has contributed significantly to balance-of-payments difficulties. The Strategy proposes the adoption of policies and measures that seek to enhance the capacity of developing countries in utilizing scientific and technological development as well as in modifying and adapting them to suit local environmental conditions. In this connection, it is important to upgrade the level of technological development in Africa by devoting at least 1 - 2 per cent of GDP to Research and Development, with a view to upgrading traditional technology, blending it with new and advanced technology through adaptation and modification. Technology planning has to be reformulated within identified priorities and overall national development objectives, and related particularly and functionally to agriculture, industry, health, education and transport with earmarked investment resources to achieve a measure of self-reliance within reasonable time.

39. The role of technology in the transformation process cannot be overemphasised. The history of technology development in countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea and Brazil provides Africa with several lessons worthy of emulation. Even Africa's own historical experience shows that certain African subregions are noted for highly developed and above rudimentary

traditional skills of local production, technologies and general handicraft. To narrow the technological gap between industrialized countries and Africa, it is imperative that the countries in the region invest in their own people and improve the climate for enterprise.

B. Industrial Policies and Measures

40. According to the Strategy, industrialization constitutes a central element in the reactivation of development in the 1990s. Given the limits of agriculture as a means of providing increased employment and additional export earnings, industrialization becomes indispensable for sustained economic growth and social development.

41. New strategies are needed to revitalize the industrial sector. Participation of the private sector and small business ventures need to be encouraged through fiscal policies that will effectively encourage business savings and investment. Experience has shown that there can be limitations to public ownership approach to industrialization. At the same time, there is considerable scope for enhancing the contribution that private enterprise can make to a dynamic process of industrialization. Therefore, entrepreneurship should be encouraged at all levels, in particular development of medium private and small scale industries that will contribute to the provision of urban and rural employment opportunities.

42. In the African context, industrialization plans have additionaly been plagued by inappropriate and poorly conceived economic policies and inadequate financial resources. In line with this, the Strategy proposes policy measures to deal with the chronic underutilization of existing industrial capacity, poor maintenance, import constraints and technological obsolescence. The proposed measures include inter alia: increased investment directly related to manufacturing capacity; improved managerial and technical skills and trained manpower; modernized infrastructure in such areas as communications and transport, banking and finance; supportive policy framework in the fiscal and monetary fields; improved linkages between industry and the other sectors of the economy, particularly the rural sector; application of import substitution and/or export-led industrialization policies; and, the promotion of industrial cooperation among developing countries at the global, regional and sub-regional levels, through setting up joint ventures and programmes for training and upgrading skills. Nonetheless, within the African context, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa remains the main framework for guiding efforts to enhance industrial capabilities in the region.

C. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

43. The IDS highlighted increased food production and distribution as a major element in the combating of poverty and the revitalization of economic growth during the 1990s. Realizing adequate and secure food supply is a pre-requisite for sustaining a high level of economic development in Africa.

44. It is acknowledged that many developing regions, including Africa, are endowed with high food production potentials. In order to enhance that potential, the Strategy underscores the importance of giving special focus to policies and measures aimed at improving food production capabilities and at overcoming the problems of low investment, poor technology and income instability. At an annual rate of growth of the order of 4 per cent on average, food production would make a major contribution to food security and provide the much- needed support for agro-industrial development in Africa.

45. The primitive methods dominating the agro-industry in Africa today is a major structural inadequacy that must be addressed to enhance food production. The strategy, therefore, recommends policies and measures to enhance the capacity of developing countries to utilize scientific and technological innovations from abroad, as well as to modify and adapt them to suit local conditions. Such policies would aim also at traditional technologies that are capable of being developed as a means of raising agricultural productivity. The Strategy also proposes that measures should be taken to bring new land under cultivation through programmes of irrigation and land settlement, where such possibilities exist, provided that adverse environmental consequences, such as would arise from excessive forest clearing, are avoided. Other policies include price incentives to the farmers, the linkage between agriculture and other sectors of the economy, improving women involvement in the agricultural sector, and increased research and development in the fields of biotechnology and genetic engineering.

46. In addition, the LPA emphasizes food self-sufficiency as a basic objective of Africa's development and calls for a set of policies and measures to be collectively undertaken by African countries to attain the objective of food self-sufficiency. Along these lines, research efforts are now giving more attention to the food supply of Africa with the view of reducing post-harvest losses and establishing regional food reserves and national and regional early warning systems. Similarly, as identified in UNPAAERD, agriculture and food is a priority sector, the development and transformation of which call for the development of the other industrial sectors. Towards that end, the UNPAAERD called upon African governments to devote at least 25-30 per cent of total public expenditure to the development of the agricultural and food sector.

CONCLUSIONS

47. It has to be recalled that, by adopting the African regional development strategies, Africa has already attempted to bring about a specific focus to its future development and advancement. To a large extent, the IDS has taken due cognizance of most of the concerns reflected in the development strategies of the African region. In particular, the basic principle of the Strategy, i.e. the acceleration of socio-economic development in developing countries with the view of narrowing the current disparities between developed and developing countries, is predicated on a broad agreement with Africa's long-term development objectives. Much more, the policies called for in the IDS in fulfilling these objectives are in general conformity with the strategies already adopted by the African countries, most importantly within the framework of the LPA and the Final Act of Lagos. However, it must be noted that while in broad agreement with the

IDS, the LPA further emphasizes collective self-reliance and regional co-operation as important vehicles for the acceleration of the development process in the African region.

48. The implementation of the IDS is a huge undertaking, involving considerable financial and manpower resources that will entail massive support from the international community. As long as Africa remains part of an interdependent world, the attainment of the objectives of the Strategy will, to that extent, be critically dependent on the improvements that could be achieved in the financial and commodity external markets and the magnitude and quality of international assistance that is particularly conducive to Africa's move towards a speedy structural transformation of its economies. No doubt, Africa can achieve socio-economic progress within the context and confines of the IDS, but only when and in so far as development partners change their attitudes in concomity with the realization of the goals of the Strategy.